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Marysville Borough Council
Testimony – MS4
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Thank you to the committee and the chairmen for allowing me to be here this morning and thank you to Representative Perry Stambaugh for the invitation to speak on behalf of the residents of Marysville. Thank you to David Magee, fellow Marysville Borough Councilman, who is also here today.

My name is Leigh Ann Urban. I serve as a member of Marysville Borough Council and I serve as the Chair of the newly created MS4 Commission in the Borough. I was appointed to Marysville Borough Council on a Monday night in March of 2021. There was a vacancy due to a recent resignation. At the meeting I was asked if I was going to run for office, little did I know, the very next day, petitions were due at the County to be listed on the ballot. I had originally said no, but with some coaxing, that no turned into a yes and with some hard work going door to door, and two long 13 hour election days, one year later I have my own four year seat on Council.

Local government is not for the faint of heart. In addition to serving on Borough Council, I serve as the Communications Manager for Lower Paxton Township which is the largest municipality in Dauphin County with over 53,000 residents, so I know firsthand the day to day the challenges that municipalities face with funding, regulations, staffing issues and the struggle to communicate with residents.

I am here to express my concern; concern for the future of municipalities impacted by MS4 regulations. As the Communications Manager for Lower Paxton Township, I joined Marysville Borough Council armed with an extensive knowledge of MS4. At the Township, I was responsible for the public roll out of their stormwater fee in 2019, from working with consultants on the original impervious coverage studies, to the public meetings, to negative press responses, to the 9 months of public communication pieces that were created and pushed out prior to the fee implementation, I was on the ground level learning, interacting with engineers and gaining knowledge about MS4. I recognize my experience with MS4 sets me apart from my fellow council members, and I feel fortunate that my time at the Township has exposed me so immensely to garner such knowledge, because I think it helps me in my role at Borough. It reminds me how challenging regulations like this are and can be for small municipalities who just don't have the manpower, nor the time, nor the funding to meet such requirements.

To my knowledge, currently, the Borough is the only municipality in Perry County that must comply with the unfunded MS4 mandate, which is hard to justify and explain to our 2,500 residents. Marysville entered into its NPDES permit in 2017. It is now 2022 and only one project from our Pollutant Reduction Plan has been completed. I'm not trying to place blame or call out our staff or council but what's the story? What's taking

so long? When I joined council that was one of my first questions. Well, Marysville has an office staff of two people; a borough manager and a financial secretary. We have a two-man public works crew and a two-man crew that works in our waste water treatment plant, plus a two-man police department. Our engineer is outsourced and contracted through Pennoni Engineering. 5 out of 7 of our Council Members work full time jobs, and yet the majority of them play major roles in helping the Borough function. So, while the Borough has complied with creating the PRP, starting the actual projects for us has been much more difficult. From my perspective, if a municipality of 53,000 people struggled through the process with several staff members plus outside paid consultants committed to the progression, imagine how hard this is for the Borough of Marysville with a staff of 2.

If you review our Pollutant Reduction Plan you would find that the project that would satisfy a large majority of our requirement is not on Borough property nor on a property that was easy to get access to. It is on a non-profit's land; the Lions Club, known as Lions Club Park. Ironing out a lease with the Lions Club took the work of several council members, multiple Lions Club members and over half a year of back-and-forth negotiations. All that work and all those manhours were just to get an easement to some fields and a pond, but those fields and that pond will help the Borough meet about 65-70% of its MS4 requirement. So, while it may seem simple to review a Pollutant Reduction Plan and approve it when it crosses someone's desk at DEP, there are many more steps behind the scenes that must take place. In Marysville's case, those steps took many hours, and many people's time and energy and we haven't even scratched the surface yet.

How are we going to pay for it?

Last fall, we formed an MS4 Commission. The Commission is a recommending body tasked with coming up with a way to pay for the Borough's MS4 projects as well as a helping to assist with public outreach. Just like with the Lions Club lease, the Commission has gone back and forth for months on the best way to come up with the money to pay for the unfunded MS4 requirements. The projects listed in this current PRP will cost about \$1 million dollars and while that may not sound like much, it is for a Borough whose general fund annual budget is roughly \$1.1 million. We have a portion of our population who is lower income and as council members, we must constantly think about what addition fees would do to their households. At our monthly meetings we discuss grants and loans and potential fee structures, and it truly is daunting. I believe by gathering data and input from impacted municipalities Representative Boback's bill could have a huge impact on places like Marysville and could greatly assist council's like mine who continue to struggle to decide how to come up with the funds to complete the projects necessary to meet the MS4 requirements.

As I mentioned before, the Borough permitting cycle is 2017-2023, and with our deadline quickly approaching, we become more and more overwhelmed wondering what is coming next. Will there be another 5-year permit? Is this a never-ending cycle? With

such a short window of time to navigate these ever-changing rules and regulations and limited communication from DEP about what's to come next, it makes it very challenging for me and my fellow council members to plan for the future. The MS4 Commission has spent many long evenings deliberating about the funding stream and as we begin to roll out our plan, we still have no guidance on what to tell our residents about the future. We only have one pond, one stream, and two basins... what are we supposed to reduce next? And when will we know? Our permit expires in a year. Is this unfunded mandate here forever? I sure hope not.

Thank you so much for your time and your efforts and for your commitment to the people of this commonwealth.